

1911

824 De Graw Avenue, Newark, N. J.

October 24th, 1911.

*To the Commanders and Adjutants of the Grand Army
Posts of the Department of New Jersey, Greeting:*

Will you kindly read the following at your next regular Post meeting, then give it to your Patriotic Instructor:

MY DEAR COMRADES—By virtue of the authority with which you clothed our Department Commander, he has, despite my protest, appointed me Patriotic Instructor of the Department for another year. I appreciate the honor, I assure you, still I do say: How little my work would have amounted to were it not for just such kind and loving hearts and strong hands to sustain me as yours, and the ever faithful patriotic ladies of the G. A. R. and similar organizations, who have ever stood by to help in every time of need.

We may well feel happy that we stand with them today at the head of all the States in the grand patriotic work. While our labors have not been in vain still I feel keenly the fact that our ranks are fast being depleted and our work increasing—and I get many calls for help from religious and civic life—and it seems the patriotic curriculum of the public and parish schools is as regularly looked for once a year as any part of their duties, and it is one of the very enjoyable occasions which I hope you have all experienced.

Now, may I ask you to embrace every opportunity for work? Try to get one school at least in each county named in honor of Mr. Lincoln. See to it that the schools have a flag for inside work, and if you can't get them one, send me word; maybe I can. See if the flag salute is observed at least once a week. See if any school is in need of a framed copy of the Lincoln Gettysburg address to hang in the assembly room, and let me know if you are unable to get it for them. Try to drop in any public or parish school (that may be near you) on the last school day prior to November 19th, the anniversary of the dedication of the Gettysburg Cemetery. Talk to them a little about Mr. Lincoln. Keep in mind, too, the birthday of Mr. Lincoln and Washington, Flag Day, June 14th. Also the last school day before Memorial Day. And may I say in all love when we visit the schools let us

try and remember that the war ended at Appomattox, and that we have a united country now—such as never before—and let us try to put under all bitterness. Ask ourselves what would we have done had we been brought up in the South. As a whole, they will stand with us every time in defence of Old Glory. They have had a hard struggle and we can well afford to be kind to them.

I was so much pleased to see that on last Memorial Day the ex-Confederates turned out and helped our G. A. R. men to decorate the many Union soldiers' graves at and near Gainesville, Georgia, and that near evening a large gathering of people assembled in a public square and Mrs. Helen Longstreet, widow of the great Confederate General Longstreet, presided. The school children sang "My Country, 'Tis of Thee," and then an old ex-Confederate, Rev. J. C. Edmonson, who lost a leg at Gettysburg, delivered a stirring address and read the Lincoln Gettysburg address.

Dear Comrades, we must try and prove ourselves worthy of the little bronze button we wear, and as our shadows lengthen let us be considerate. Up yonder are the victors who wore the blue, and the men who wore the gray are there, too. Divine love has cleared the mists away. Hearts and hands of the victors have clasped the honest hands and touched the crumbled hearts of the boys who wore the gray. There is no sting of bitterness there. There should be none here. How sweet to think the dear mother, the wife, the sweetheart, who through long and weary years their vigil kept, waiting for the sound of feet that never came. They will all meet their boys in blue and their boys in gray. So let us relent and repent, and have our hearts so attuned by Divine love as to exclude all hate and bitterness.

Some of you complain that you have no blanks on which to make your reports. Just make them to me in the shape or form of a letter. Tell me what you are doing and have done. How you are and all about it. I will enjoy it so much, and may our Heavenly Father help and keep you and give you great peace.

With love and all that it means, I am,

Yours in F., C. and D.,

URIAH SEELY.

Patriotic Instructor,

Department New Jersey, G. A. R.

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